Sr. No.	Name of Exchange	Waiting list as on 31.3.98 PTF
289. (I)	Tinsukia	328
289. (II)	Tinsukia	0
290.	Titabar	30
291.	Udalguri	57
292.	Udharbond	192
293.	Umrangshu	50
294.	Uriagaon	2
295.	Uriamghat	2
	Total:	20795

Contract System A source of Corruption

4481. SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that many work of Telecom like laying cables, telephone connections and repair are given on contract to private contractors;

(b) if so, the reasons for engaging such large number of contractors;

(c) whether Government are aware that these contract system has become a source of corruption; and

(d) if so, the steps taken to check malpractices?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA): (a) Yes Sir, Telecom Works like laying cables, installation of telephone lines and some repair work are given on contract to private contractors.

(b) The quantum of work to be done is more than what can be done through departmental manpower. These works are to be completed in a limited period and the not spread evenly throughout the year. Therefore private contractors have to be engaged for completing the work to meet the targets.

(c) and (d) Sometimes complaints about corruption are received. The contracts are awarded by calling open tenders by observing specified departmental guidelines. Proper supervision is kept on the Contractor's work, Vigilance Cells are functioning at various levels to keep a close watch on any kind of malpractice. When any, specific case of corruption is brought to the notice of the department, it is looked/investigated and further departmental action is taken.

Income-Tax Returns By Agricultural Credit Societies/Cooperative Banks in Kerala

4482. SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the Income-tax authorities in Kerala and insisting that the Primary Agricultural Credit Societies and Cooperative Banks should file income-tax returns; and

(b) whether Government will favourable consider the demand that these institutions which do not come within the purview of Banking Regulation Act and which are not undertaking any business other than those specified in Section 80(p) (2) of the Income-tax Act, 1961, shall be exempted from the obligation to submit income-tax returns?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI R. JANARATHANAM): (a) Yes Sir. The Income-tax authorities in Kerala are insisting that the primary Agricultural Credit Societies and Cooperatives Banks, whose income is not exempt u/s 80(p)(2) of the I.T. Act, 1961, should file their returns of income.

(b) No Sir. At present there is no such proposal under consideration.